

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DELAYS IN SOVIET PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION

SUMMARY. PRAVDA'S AUGUST 23 EDITORIAL COMPLAINS OF
SERIOUS DELAYS IN OIL AND GAS PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION
AND CITES A FEW SPECIFIC INSTANCES. IT PROVIDES
LITTLE OVERALL DATA, HOWEVER, EXCEPT TO SAY THAT
2,400 KM OF OIL PIPELINE ARE SUPPOSED TO BE BUILT
THIS YEAR -- AN APPARENTLY VERY MODEST GOAL IN THAT IT
IS ONLY SOMEWHAT OVER HALF THE LENGTH OF OIL AND PRO-
DUCT PIPELINES REPORTEDLY COMPLETED LAST YEAR. END
SUMMARY.

1. ALL IS NOT GOING WELL ON OIL AND GAS PIPELINE
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CONSTRUCTION IN THE SOVIET UNION. PRAVDA'S AUGUST 23
EDITORIAL NOTES THAT CONSTRUCTION AND INSTALLATION
WORK WAS BELOW PLAN AT THE SEVEN-MONTH MARK, AND IT
MENTIONS GREAT DELAYS ON THE KIENGOP-NABEREZHNYE CHELNY
AND KRASNODARSK-IRKUTSK LINES, AND ESPECIALLY ON THE
SURGUT-POLOTSK LINE. IN THE FIRST SEVEN MONTHS ONLY
ONE-FOURTH OF THE WORK CONTRACTED WAS FULFILLED ON THE

LATTER. ALSO, USE OF THE LISICHANSK-KREMENCHUG OIL PIPELINE IS HELD UP BY DELAYS WITH TWO PUMPING STATIONS ON THE KUYBYSHEV-LISICHANSK PORTION.

2. THE EDITORIAL SAYS THAT LAST YEAR THERE WERE DELAYS ON THE GAS PIPELINE RUNNING URENGOY-NADYM-PUNGA-UKHTA-TORZHOK (77 MOSCOW 9989) AND THAT MORE THAN A THOUSAND KILOMETERS OF PIPELINE AND 22 COMPRESSOR STATIONS STILL REMAIN TO BE PUT INTO OPERATION. IN ADDITION TO CALLING FOR A GENERAL SPEEDING UP OF THE TEMPO OF WORK, THE EDITORIAL ALSO MENTIONS THE FOLLOWING AS PRIORITY TASKS IN THE GAS AREA: PUTTING INTO OPERATION BEFORE WINTER PIPELINES LEADING TO THE INDUSTRIALIZED REGIONS OF THE CENTER AND THE URALS, COMPLETING START-UP WORK ON (THE THIRD) SECTION OF THE ORENBURG GAS CONDENSATE COMPLEX, AND FILLING UNDERGROUND STORAGE WITH THE NECESSARY AMOUNTS OF GAS.

3. THE EDITORIAL MENTIONS IN PASSING THAT 2,400 KILOMETERS OF OIL TRANSPORT ARTERIES ARE TO BE BUILT THIS YEAR--THE FIRST MENTION WE RECALL OF THIS GOAL.

4. COMMENT. WHETHER THE GOAL FOR OIL PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION IS IN LINE WITH ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE TENTH FIVE YEAR PLAN IS A BIT UNCLEAR. IT MAY BE ON THE ORDER OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING 1976 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND CONSIDERABLY BELOW THOSE OF 1977. THE OFFICIAL STATISTICS SAY 2.7 THOUSAND KM OF OIL AND PRODUCT PIPELINE WERE CONSTRUCTED IN 1976 AND 4 THOUSAND IN 1977; SEE EK. GAZ. NO. 5 OF 1977 AND NO. 6 OF 1978. (GAS PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION WAS 5.5 AND 6 THOUSAND KM RESPECTIVELY.) OTHER SOURCES GIVE A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT PICTURE. ACCORDING TO ISSUE NO. 7 OF POLITICHESKIE SAMOOBROZOVANIE, OIL AND OIL PRODUCT PIPELINES GREW FROM 57,000 KM AT THE END OF 1975 TO ABOUT 62,000 AT THE END OF 1977. ISSUE NO. 6 OF PLANOVOE KHOZYAYSTVO STATES THAT AT THE BEGINNING OF 1977 THERE WERE IN EXISTENCE 48,400 KM OF OIL PIPELINE, 10,200 KM OF PRODUCT PIPELINE AND 103,500 KM OF GAS PIPELINE.

5. ALTHOUGH GAS OUTPUT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE BRIGHTER ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SOVIET ECONOMY IN THE PRESENT FIVE YEAR PLAN, THE DELAYS ON THE URENGOY-TORZHOK GAS PIPELINE ARE POTENTIALLY QUITE SERIOUS AS THAT FIELD IS SCHEDULED TO SUPPLY THE MAJOR AND INCREASING PORTION OF TOTAL PRODUCTION. ATTAINMENT OF THE 1980 NATIONAL GOAL MAY HINGE ON TIMELY INSTALLATION OF PIPELINE CAPACITY FOR THAT FIELD. TOON

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